

THE
MONTHLY
THEATRICAL REPORTER ;
OR,
LITERARY MIRROR.

FOR
FEBRUARY, 1815.

By THOMAS DUTTON, A. M.

EMBELLISHED WITH A FULL-LENGTH PORTRAIT OF MISS FOOTE,
AS LUCILLE, IN THE FOREST OF BONDY.

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Letter, with the device: "*We all have our hobbies,*" has been duly received. The ingenious writer has our best thanks for his judicious remarks, to which befitting attention shall be paid.

The angry Epistle, relative to the *alleged* illiberality of the Directors of the Drury-Lane *Oratorios*, towards certain vocal performers, does not fall within our competency and jurisdiction. The Director of that, or any other public enterprise, has a right to conclude the most advantageous bargain he can for himself.

Philalotes will perceive that we have profited of his theatrical hints; we shall be glad of his future favours,

The continuation of the *Theatrical Balance* has been unavoidably postponed, till next month, in order to make room for several articles, sent us by different correspondents. Our publication assuming a more varied and miscellaneous character, with the appearance of the present number, we were desirous to manifest our gratitude for the kind communications of our friends and readers, by giving insertion to their favours, in preference to articles known to be furnished by the Editor. Hence, *Dick Duggins's account of his Journey to Thames'-Street* has taken place of the *Theatrical-Balance*.

* * The reader is requested to correct an error, which has inadvertently crept into the professional sketch of Mr. Abbott, given in our last number. It was not in the character of *Ferdinand*, in the *Tempest*, (as there stated by mistake), that Mr. Abbott made his first appearance at Covent-Garden theatre; but in that of *Florian*, in the *Foundling of the Forest*.

THE
MONTHLY THEATRICAL REPORTER,
&c.

PROFESSIONAL SKETCH OF MISS FOOTE, OF COVENT-
GARDEN THEATRE.

BY A CORRESPONDENT.

*Siderum sanctos imitata vultus,
Quo lates dudum, rosa? delicatum
Efferas terris caput, O tepentis
Filia cæli!*

THOSE of the present generation, to whom the universal improvement of society is dear, have no slight satisfaction in witnessing, as a powerful testimony of the rapid extension of general intellect, the decided emancipation of the English stage from the shackles of prejudice, and bigot intolerance. Too long have the votaries of the drama laboured under the same ban of religious interdict, in this country, which still obtains to the disgrace of the age, in a neighbouring kingdom, and of which such an * atrocious instance has been recently given, in the French metropolis, utterly unworthy of a people breathing the air of civilization. The drama was denounced, by the Puritans of the last age, as a † *Nazareth*, from which no possible good could issue, and the more enlightened elders of the present

* See page 181 of the present Number.

† The town of Nazareth stood in ill repute among the Jews; so much so in fact, that it was *synonymous* with infamy. A proof of this may be seen in the first chapter of the Gospel of St. John, where Philip informs his brother Nathaniel, that they had "found him,

day could with difficulty bring themselves to submit to the force, brought against them by the spirit and reason of the times, for remission of the heavy imposts, levied by their intolerant ancestors, the right to which was eagerly disputed for, like an inheritance, by infuriate zealots and sectarians. Persons indeed, of this character and description appear at all times, and in all places, as if sent into the world for no other purpose, than to contribute to the eventual triumph of Truth, by their ever-restless opposition to its operations and power.

It is honorable both to the character of the modern stage, and the enlarged sense and discernment of the nation, at large, that our candidates for theatrical honours are now freely seen to pass, from the most-respected walks of life, to their *ordeal* on the boards: and that the favorites of Thespis, in return, whose merits, abilities, and irreproachable character have asserted their right to consideration and respect, have frequently, of late years, been removed from the mimic scene, to grace the highest stations of society. This interchange of place and desert constitutes as powerful an appeal, as can well be imagined, to that principle of justice and liberality, which should characterize a great people, in behalf of an art and a profession, deservedly cherished, valued and esteemed, by men most eminent for their talents and understanding, throughout every better region of the European world.

The Father of Miss Foote held for many years a Commission in the army, and is still an officer, on the half-pay establishment. Her Mother was Maria, the daughter of Charles Hart, Esq., of London, whose marriage with Mr. Foote took place, while she was very young, and Maria, their only child, was born at Plymouth, in 1798. At this last mentioned period, Mr. Foote had relinquished his military profession, and purchased the proprietorship of the Plymouth theatre, where, in his capacity of manager, he became largely known to the theatrical circle, most of our best performers, at various times during his directorship, having been successively engaged by him, for the gratification of his patrons and numerous friends, in the west.

"of whom Moses and the prophets did write,—Jesus of Nazareth." Nathaniel immediately returns for answer: "Can any good thing
"come out of Nazareth?"

In 1813, Mr. Foote declined for a while the cares of the stage, and, renewing his commission, he for some years continued an officer in the royal Cornwall militia. The regiment being on the march to Newcastle upon Tyne, Mrs. Foote, on an occasion, con-nected, we believe, with some benevolent motive, was induced to perform at the Harrowgate theatre, and her reception being of the most flattering kind, she afterwards played at Cheltenham, for a night or two, under circumstances of a similar nature. Considerable expectation on the subject of her performances having been thus excited, among her Plymouth friends, Mrs. Foote, soon after the management of their property there devolved again upon Mr. Foote, appeared in divers popular characters, with the greatest success. Her sylph-like form; the delightful *naiveté* of her manner; and the many accomplishments that combined to qualify her for the task she had assumed, secured her a welcome, whenever she performed, of the warmest kind; and in several personations, of the juvenile and sprightly cast, not forgetting those which required her assumption of the male attire, wherein the beauty of her figure was unrivalled, we do not know that we have ever seen an actress, on any boards whatever, better calculated to command both admiration and applause.

In the July of 1810, her lovely daughter, then only twelve years of age, was induced to attempt the part of the youthful *Juliet*, and, notwithstanding the timidity, natural to an age so tender, she surmounted the difficulties of the undertaking in a way, that left no doubt of her becoming a cherished favourite of the Muse, should she be permitted to adopt the arduous duties of the stage. From this time, the encouragement she received gradually brought her before the Plymouth audiences, as a principal support of the pieces, performed in the course of that and the ensuing seasons, and the patronage awarded her, in consequence, by the first people of the town and neighborhood, as well as by the public in general, was uniformly of the most liberal kind,—honourable to her in the extreme, as an actress so young and inexperienced, and equally tributary to the well-known attractiveness of her artless character, in private life. In parts like *Irene*, in *Barbarossa*, *Emma Bertram*, *Zoroyda*, *Virginia*, *Susan Ashfield*, *Julia in the Rivals*, and particularly *Emily Worthington*, we have at no time known any one to make a more favourable impression than Miss FOOTE; and the visits of performers from the metropolis never failed to add professional

testimony to her growing talents, of a description the most gratifying to the feelings of her parents, whose sedulous attention to her education and progress in every desirable accomplishment, was happily never interrupted by separation, or any other intervening cause.

With respect to her vocal abilities, we have known Miss FOOTE to support operatical characters with considerable effect. Her musical attainments, indeed, are highly creditable to her application, and in the execution of the *petit ballet*, she has frequently evinced no small excellence in the mazy dance. Her extreme youth, however, and, we doubt not, her own commensurate diffidence, have hitherto operated to withhold her from encountering the fearful judgments of town criticism, in either of those departments, though we confidently anticipate that, in time her claims on the public favour will be found to be materially enhanced, by the due development of those powerful auxiliary aids to which we now advert.

On the close of the Plymouth house, after the season of 1811, it was re-opened by Mr Foote, for a series of *amateur-plays*, the proceeds of which, to a great amount, were applied, through several weeks of a severe winter, to benevolent purposes. In assisting the gentlemen who had stepped forward on this occasion, Miss FOOTE, together with her mother kindly and readily undertook and performed several laborious characters, with uncommon approbation.—The following summer witnessed Mr Foote's final retirement from the conduct of the theatre, and Mrs. and Miss FOOTE accordingly addressed their Plymouth friends on the same night, on their consequent separation from a place where they had never ceased to gain "golden opinions from all sorts of people."

Miss FOOTE made her *debut*, before a London audience, in the month of May, 1814, as *Amanthis*, in the *Child of Nature*, at Covent-Garden theatre, and was received with every demonstration of pre-eminent favour. Her appearance led to an immediate engagement, and she has since been seen to support several characters, (among which the two original ones of *Lucille*, in the *Forest of Bondy* ; and *Ulrica*, in the *King and the Duke*, stand particularly esteemed,) with a grace, delicacy, and propriety, faithful in every degree to the gratifying impressions, which at her first appearance she so generally excited. She has likewise very recently, Jan., 2, of the present year, supported with no mean share of appropriate

simplicity and artless, unaffected truth, the part of *Miranda*, in *the Tempest*. Her ingenuous and unsophisticated style of acting always ensures her the sympathy and support of genuine taste, and unbiassed judgment, and we know no *debutante* within our recollection, in whose behalf the public prints have been more unanimously distributive of disinterested praise. The managers, we doubt not, adequately appreciate the worth and beauty of the blossom they have undertaken to rear and foster, and we experience sincere satisfaction in believing, that its future development and value will be found every way worthy of their tenderest and most especial care.

In private life, Miss FOOTE requires only to be known, to be loved, and admired. Nature has been liberal of her favours to her, in every point essential to enhance the female character, and render it entitled to homage and respect. We conclude the present sketch, by expressing our sincere wishes for her continued success in the arduous path that lies before her, with the hope that, whatever fate may have in store for her, her career may ever be cheered by the conscious approbation of her own breast, and the unclouded sunshine of domestic happiness.



THEATRICAL FORE-STALLING AND RE-GRATING.

To the Editor of the Monthly Theatrical Reporter.

SIR,

I BEG leave, through the medium of your miscellany, to call the attention of the proprietors and managers of Covent-Garden theatre to an abuse very prevalent at the above house. I allude to the practice of certain of the box-keepers, who very often pretend that seats are engaged, and taken, merely with an eye to personal and illicit gain.

I am, Mr. Editor, in the habit of frequenting the theatres, three or four times every week. A few evenings ago, I repaired to Covent-Garden, to see Miss O'NEILL perform the part of *Belvidera*, in *Venice Preserved*. On entering a box, on the second circle, I was given to understand by the box-keeper, as well as by a person stationed there, to keep places said to be engaged, that the two front rows of seats were positively retained. I demanded, whether the same was the case, with the next book on each side of me, and was answered in the affirmative.

Having no other remedy, I very patiently seated myself on the third row. Here I had not remained many minutes, when two gentlemen with a lady entered the box, and after having made the same inquiry as myself, with respect to the pre-occupation of the front seats, took their places very quietly next to me. Presently, one of the gentlemen left the box, but soon after returned, accompanied by the box-keeper, who beckoned to the lady and her companion, and ushered them into the very identical places, but a few minutes before said to be taken and engaged. Observing this transaction, I watched my opportunity, and directed a significant look at the box-keeper. My meaning was instantly understood ; the box-keeper very politely offered me a seat in the same box, where he had so kindly provided for the lady and her two companions.

In about a quarter of an hour, the box-keeper returned, and whispered something, the purport of which I had no difficulty in conjecturing, in the ear of one of the gentlemen. The latter thrust his hand into his pocket, and pulling out a small silver coin, tendered it to the obliging box-keeper, who thereupon withdrew, with a civil inclination of the head.

Similar impositions, it seems, were formerly resorted to, by the box-keepers of Drury-Lane theatre. But complaint having been made to the managers, a very positive order was published at the bottom of the Drury-Lane bills, requesting frequenters of the theatre not to comply with any exactions whatever;—at the same time declaring their irrevocable determination to discharge from his situation any box-keeper, against whom such illicit practices should be proved. This firm measure produced the desired effect ; and its adoption at Covent-Garden theatre would, I am persuaded, afford entire satisfaction to the frequenters of the theatre at large, as well as to,

Mr. Editor,

Your humble servant,

and constant reader,

Phylax.

The Albany, }
19th December, 1815. }



DITHYRAMBIC STRICTURES;

OR,

THOUGHTS ON THE INFERIORITY OF MODERN POETRY TO
THAT OF THE ANCIENTS.*Interspersed with practical Hints, for restoring the Art to its
original Excellence.*

Nulla valere diu, nec vivere carmina possunt;
Quæ scribuntur AQUÆ POTORIBUS.

Hor. Lib. 1. Ep. 19.

I have ever been of opinion, that to discover error, without at the same time attempting to rectify it, is of very little service to the community; and that the man who labours (however unsuccessful his efforts may prove) to redress any public grievance, merits infinitely more of society at large, than the speculative philosopher, who, after pointing out abuses, contents himself with sitting down and bewailing them. Thus, though the proverb justly observes, that—"a knowledge of the disease is half the cure,"—we very well know, that this knowledge is only in so far serviceable, as it enables us to ascertain the proper means for eradicating the distemper; and that the patient will reap no benefit from it, unless the specific remedy, adapted to his or her particular case, be duly administered. In like manner, we shall act with greater consistency, as well as greater ultimate success, if, instead of joining the common voice, and lamenting the inferiority of the Moderns, in works of genius, when compared with the Ancients, we endeavour to investigate the cause of this inferiority; in order that we may be enabled, from a thorough knowledge of the disease, to discover and prescribe the proper remedy and mode of cure.

It is with this view, that I come forward on the present occasion; willing to contribute my mite towards the accomplishment of a point, so devoutly to be wished. And though I am well aware, that a dissertation of this nature would come with far better grace from the pen of a BYRON; a WALTER SCOTT; or a SOUTHEY; I shall not, I trust, be thought too presuming (*ἀμειβος* as I am) for reading lectures on a science, of which I am an *amateur*, rather than a professor: considering the great notoriety which your Doctors L——; H——; T——; G——; C——; &c. &c. &c. have acquired, by

the cure of a *certain disorder*, which such virtuous characters can never be supposed to have laboured under themselves.

Although it appears from the most moderate calculations, that no body of men, no people whatever under the sun, have increased in so rapid a degree as the tuneful sons of song; we do not find that any nation (not excepting the Chinese themselves) has more scrupulously, I might say *servilely*, adhered to its primitive customs, manners, and laws. That *levelling spirit*, that *thirst after independance*, that *impatience of control*, which in all countries and in all ages have been productive of such amazing revolutions, such continual changes and vicissitudes, and which for upwards of twenty years have deluged a neighbouring kingdom with blood, and rendered it the theatre of every species of horror, guilt and atrocity, have never been able to obtain footing among the poetic tribe. On the contrary, we daily hear them boast of their dependance on certain favouring powers, under whose influence and patronage they affect to act, and to whom they profess themselves indebted for whatever share of excellence, whatever degree of merit they may be possessed of. Nay, so far are they from being ashamed of this their state of vassallage; so far from disavowing their dependance; that you cannot offer a greater insult to any of the fraternity, than by disputing his inspiration, and attributing all the clever things he writes or utters to his own ingenuity and wit. Hence their frequent invocations of Apollo; of the Muses, &c. &c.;—in the pomp and parade of which they seem to imitate the Pharisees of old, who, we are informed, were wont “to sound a trumpet before them,” whenever they went to pray.

Probably, it is owing to this part of their conduct, that the critics of all ages have fallen into an error, which at first sight appears very specious. I mean the custom of attributing the inspiration, which Poets so much boast of, to the friendly offices of Apollo, and the Nine Muses. To those, who reason from appearances, and ground their opinion upon the testimony of the poets themselves, this inference, I grant, must appear natural and just. But when we reflect, that *Fiction* is not altogether out of the province of poetry, and that there have been bards, (with reverence be it spoken!) who thought it no sin to deviate a little from the strait, narrow path of *Truth*;—(when the said path became either too intricate to follow, or less inviting than the regions of *Fancy*;) we ought, methinks, to be cautious how we place implicit faith in their assertions. For my part, after

carefully perusing the works of most of our celebrated Poets, I am clearly of opinion, that few, very few indeed,—(scarcely one in a hundred, on an average)—can lay claim to any kind of inspiration whatever; and that even those few, whose works do appear to bear some latent marks of divinity or super-natural influence, are more indebted for this honorable distinction to the friendly offices of BACCHUS, than to Phœbus and his Nine Muses put together.

However unpopular this opinion may be, it is from the voluntary confession of the Poets themselves, that I mean to support it. A late celebrated author and Right-Reverend * Divine very pertinently observes, that: “let us take what pains we please to disguise our real sentiments, still Truth will always be at hand; it sits upon our lips, and is ready to drop out, before we are aware. For being born with us, we must do violence to Nature to shake off our veracity. Where Truth is not at the bottom, (he adds) Nature will always be endeavouring to return; and will infallibly peep out and betray herself, at one time or other.”

In conformity to this assertion, which is further corroborated by the testimony of Horace:

Naturam expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret.

Lib. I. Ep. 10.

we find that there are certain unguarded moments, when even the Poets themselves, whose interest it so eminently is to support by every possible means their *Parnassian system of inspiration*, have been led to discover to us the true source of their excellence; and, like Sampson, have been weak enough to betray the secret, wherein their *great strength lieth*. Thus Horace, in his Epistle to his friend Julius Florus, fairly “lets the cat out of the bag,”—(the reader will please to pardon the homeliness of the phrase,)—and in plain terms avows, that a Poet is

rite cliens Bacchi.

Lib. II. Ep. 2.

In another place he exclaims, with a degree of *enthusiasm* scarcely to be paralleled in any author:

Quid non ebrietas designat? addocet artes.

Lib. I. Ep. 5.

and immediately adds:

* Archbishop Tillotson.

Fecundi calices quem non fecere disertum?

thereby appealing to the experience of his readers, for the truth of his assertions.

As Homer is universally acknowledged to be the Father of Poetry, I should stand in need of no apology for having recourse to his authority, in support of my hypothesis. But, lest quotations from the Greek should give too pedantic an appearance to the present essay, I shall content myself with observing, that whenever he has occasion to make mention of Bacchus, and the benefits conferred upon mankind by that Deity, in instructing the primæval world to cultivate the vine, and prepare the juice of the grape, it is always in a strain of the most glowing enthusiasm. This sufficiently accounts for the epithet of *wine-bibber*, (*vinosus*) bestowed upon him by Horace:

Laudibus arguitur vini vinosus Homerus.

Lib. I. Ep. 19.

And from the verse immediately preceeding:

Vina fere dulces oluerunt mane Camenæ,

one might be tempted to imagine, that the Muses, of whom so much *fuss* has been made in all ages, were neither more nor less than certain *kind nymphs*, belonging to the train of Bacchus; perhaps the original *Bacchæ*, or priestesses of Dionysius.

Supposing this to have been the case, we shall no longer be surprized at the frequent and honourable mention made of the Muses, by the Poets; with design, no doubt, to insinuate themselves into the good graces of Bacchus, by paying their court to his mistresses, Or, perhaps, they might wish to gain them over to their interest, and avail themselves of their intercession with their Patron; in like manner as the Roman-Catholics solicit Heaven's favours, at *second-hand*, through the mediation of the Blessed Virgin, and their endless catalogue of Saints,

Indeed how else, but by adopting this position, can we explain several passages in the writings of the ancients, in which their invocations of the Muses have an obvious analogy to their connexion with Bacchus? Such, for instance, is that passage in the twelfth Ode of the first book of Horace, where the poet invokes the aid of Clio from the top of Hæmus:

gelidove in Hæmo,

a mountain famous for the *orgies* of Bacchus, and on which, he tells us, the forests danced a jig to the lyre of Orpheus:

—Vocalem temere insectatæ
Orpheæ silvæ.

Lib. I. Od. 12.

which passage I take to be an allegory, signifying that the *Mænades* being on this occasion crowned, according to custom, with a great profusion of garlands and wreaths of ivy, their dance must have appeared to a distant spectator, as if a whole forest of trees had been set in motion, footing it up and down the hill to the measure of Orpheus, who, it seems, acted the part of principal musician, or head-fiddler at these frantic revels.

Similar to this is a passage in Shakspeare's Tragedy of *Macbeth*, where a messenger, announcing the approach of an army from Birnam, makes use of the very same identical figure:

I look'd tow'rd Birnham, and anon, methought,

The wood began to move.

Within this three miles you may see it coming;

I say, a moving grove!

Virgil, in his *Georgics*, Book II. after a beautiful apostrophe to the Muses, in which he ardently implores their favour and instruction, suddenly breaks out into a wish, that some kind enchanter would transport him; not to the groves of Parnassus, or the sacred waters of Helicon; but to Taygetus or Hæmus, both of which mountains were frequented by the worshippers of Bacchus:

—O! ubi campi

Sperchiusque et virginibus bacchata Læænis

Taygeta! O! qui me gelidis in vallibus Hæmi

Sistat, et ingenti ramorum protegat umbrâ?

Georg. Lib. II. v. 166.

From the words "*ingenti ramorum umbrâ*" it should seem, that Hæmus must have been a very woody mountain, and, probably, the more acceptable to Bacchus, on account of its abounding in *oak-trees*, for which his ivy appears to have a natural predilection. This opinion is amply confirmed by the testimony of Horace, who expressly classes the *oak-trees* among the dancing followers of Orpheus, in the Ode already cited, where by a bold poetical figure he describes Orpheus, as

Blandum et auritas fidibus canoris

Ducere QUERCUS!

Lib. I. Od. 12.

which passage, in my apprehension, sets the *true allegorical meaning* of his relation beyond all doubt. For surely no poetical licence, however unlimited, could justify the application of the epithet *auritas* (*long-eared*) to an inanimate assemblage of trees. Most probably Milton had this passage, among others, in his eye, when he speaks :

Of FORESTS, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the EAR !

Il Penseroso.

It is a remark well worth our notice, that men of wit and genius have in all ages been supposed to possess as refined a taste for the delicacies and luxuries of life, as for literary and intellectual enjoyments. This I take to be the reason, why Plato excluded the Poets from his *Common-wealth* ; though policy might prevent that Philosopher from assigning the true cause. Horace appears to have been an excellent judge of the flavour of a pipe of wine, and was so fastidious in the choice of his liquor, that, according to his own declaration, unless the wine was of the very first quality, he preferred to drink water, which we find was the case with him, during his stay at Velia,

Nam vina nihil moror illius oræ.

Lib. I. Ep. 15.

For, adds he, when I take a trip to any of your watering-places, it is not your common wines will suit my taste :

Ad mare cum veni, generosum et lene requiro ;
Quod curas abigat ; quod cum spe divite manet
In venas animumque meum ; quod *verba* misistret.

Ibidem.

Enumerating the beauties of his favourite retreat, he particularly expatiates on the excellency of its honey, oil, and wine :

—————Non Hymetto
Mella decedunt, viridique certat
Bacca Venafro.
—————et amicus Aulon
Fertili Baccho minimum Falernis
Invidet uvis.

Lib. II. Od. 6.

This prepossession, in favour of the *taste* of men of letters, seems to have maintained itself, without any derogation, to the present day : and hence no doubt originates the almost proverbial saying,

that "no persons have better noses than the clergy, at scenting out "a good dinner." Swift, who himself belonged to this venerable body, and who from his clerical rank, as Dean, must have had an opportunity of forming a pretty accurate judgment of the general disposition of the order, bluntly declares, that among all his extensive clerical acquaintance,

He ne'er knew a Parson, without a good nose,
and tells the lady to whom he writes :

Ma'am, if you continue such dinners to give,
You'll ne'er want a parson, as long as you live.

Swift's Poems.

But whatever ideas we may form, from the instances I have already cited, of the natural propensity of men of genius to indulge in the good things of this life, there is a passage in Horace, which to me appears superior to any description I ever met with of a literary Epicure. 'Tis almost superfluous to inform the reader, that I allude to the two concluding verses of his Epistle to Tibullus, where he says :

Me pinguem ac nitidum bene curatâ cute vises,
Quum ridere voles Epicuri de grege porcum.

Lib. I. Ep. 4.

No wonder Plato should object to the reception of Poets in his *Commonwealth*, if such was their general character.

If therefore we allow, and surely after such authorities we *must* allow, that to constitute a *good poet*, nothing is more essential than *good living* : can we wonder that, in an age like the present, when men of poetical genius are suffered to pine in want and obscurity, to make room for fiddlers, horse-jockies, and buffoons ; few, very few, attain to their full growth ? Can we expect any other than to see them fall, like untimely blossoms, a prey to the piercing blasts and nipping frosts of penury and distress ; which, to make use of the elegant metaphor of Gray,

repress their noble rage,
And freeze the genial current of the soul.

Elegy in a Church-Yard.

Without admitting my hypothesis, I know not how we can account for the evident scarcity of poetical genius, in the present age. For, if we persist to believe in the common received opinion, and make Apollo and his Nine Muses the Patrons of song, some unlucky

wight might be apt to start the *quere*: "How happens it then, that we can discover as little of the effects of their inspiration, their assistance and support, as if no such beings had ever existed? Surely the Muses must have grown superannuated! Or Apollo must be deaf, and incapable of attending to the duties of his office! infirmities, which it would be downright blasphemy to suppose a Deity liable to labour under!"

We have a custom in England, which I think affords no mean argument, in support of my hypothesis. I allude to the appointment of a *POET-LAUREATE*, to whom the important duty of recording the virtues and exploits of the monarch is assigned, and on whom, by way of pension, an annuity of one hundred pounds, and a butt of sack are settled; evidently with this view, that by being enabled to offer his libations in due form to Bacchus, and to cherish his genius with suitable attention, he may produce strains worthy of the *Royal Ear*; worthy of the dignity of the nation, whose consolidated genius is supposed to centre in the Laureate, as in one common focus. Now what purpose, let me ask, would this annual pension answer, if Apollo alone were adequate to the task, of furnishing him with a supply of inspiration, commensurate to the sublimity and majesty of the subject, on which his muse is officially destined to be employed? Or, how could we justify the conduct of those, who have the appointment of this exalted character, for the choice they sometimes make of a person totally destitute of wit and *genius; unless they judge one hundred pounds per annum, and a cellar well stocked with wine, sufficient inspiration for the dullest bard, that ever penned a *Birth-day Poem*, or an *Ode for the New Year*.

No age was ever more famous than the present, for the number of authors produced among the Fair-Sex. And though some of these may not have attained to the summit, and *ne plus ultra* of literary

* We from the wordy torrent fly:

Who listens to the chatt'ring *PYE*?

Introduction to Gay's Fables.

We must, however, do this self-same *Pye* the justice to observe, that notwithstanding the contemptuous manner, in which this bird has been mentioned by Mr. Gay, it had the honour, on the very account of its garrullity, of being consecrated to Bacchus. The *Ass* was another animal, sacred to that Deity.

excellence, I think it equally ungallant and unjust to argue, that the ladies are, on that account, naturally inferior to us in mental endowments. By adopting my hypothesis, and ascribing those sublimer flights of genius, which characterize the male sex, to the superior ardour with which we pay our vows and offerings at the shrine of Bacchus, we are at once enabled to acquit the fair sex of the stigma of intellectual inferiority, which has been so undeservedly cast upon them. In ancient times, when it was deemed no disgrace for a woman to join in the rites and worship of *that* Deity, from whom the patronage of song has been so unjustly wrested, we do not find that the inferiority of the female sex to ours (a doctrine which of late has been so much the subject of dispute among our modern philosophers) was ever thought of. The name of Sappho has been handed down to us, by the ancients, with the highest veneration. Such, indeed, according to Horace, was the avidity with which her poems were read by the Romans at his time; such the unbounded applause bestowed upon her talents, that she might be said to enjoy a kind of *second-life*, that degree of *immortality* which has ever been the ambition of great and noble minds. This I presume to be the meaning of the bold and comprehensive word *vivunt*, made use of by the Roman Lyric:

Vivuntque commissi calores

Æoliæ fidibus puellæ.

Lib. IV. Od 9

It requires but a very slight acquaintance with the manners of the Greeks and Romans to know, that their ideas of *female conduct and propriety* were widely different from what we entertain at present. I rather doubt, whether the character which Horace gives us of Damalis—a lady to whom he was certainly far from bearing malice—would be esteemed a compliment by any of our modern fashionable toasts. Speaking of a projected entertainment, in celebration of the happy return of his friend Numida from Spain, he expressly mentions that a certain noted drinker, Bassus by name, was to be of the party—one who would not “knock under” (to use a *technical* term) to Damalis herself; famous as that lady was for the ease with which she could toss off her bottle, and lay the men sprawling around her on the floor:

Neu multi Damalis meri

Bassum Threiciâ vincat amystide.

Lib. I. Od. 39.

Having thus pointed out, or at least attempted to point out, the chief ingredients in the composition of a good Poet; is it to be wondered at, if (possessed of these requisites in a greater degree than we are) the *ancient* Poets and Poetesses maintain a decided ascendancy over our *modern* ones—an ascendancy not so much the result of any inherent superiority of genius, as of the happy complexion of the times, in which they flourished? If it be objected to us, that we cannot boast a *Virgil*, or a *Horace*; let it be remembered likewise, that we can as little boast a *Mæcenas*, or an *Augustus*. And I verily believe, that, however difficult we might find it to produce strains equal to those of the Mantuan Bard, it would prove a task no less difficult to produce a person, who would equal the liberality of Octavia towards that Poet, by paying at the rate of two thousand one hundred pounds sterling, and upwards, for thirty * lines. Even among the ancients themselves the progress of genius, it appears, always moved in exact proportion to the degree of encouragement it met with:—and whenever this was wanting, the Lyre, according to the express declaration of Horace, was mute and held in little estimation.

Nec loquax olim, neque grata.

Lib. III. Od. 2.

Whereas, no sooner did the lovers of the polite arts begin to patronize poetical genius, than it burst forth into full song; and was sure to raise its voice, wherever there was the least prospect of any thing to be had.

— nunc et

Divitum mensis, et amica templis.

Ibidem.

— *Dapibus* supremi

Grata testudo Jovis.

Lib. I. Od. 32.

So true is the maxim of the Roman Epigrammatist:

Sint *Mæcenates*, non deerunt, Flacce, *Marones*.

Whoever therefore wishes to behold the revival of poetical genius

* We are told in the life of Virgil, that Octavia, sister to the Emperor Augustus, was so affected with the recital of a passage in the Sixth Book of the *Æneid*, relating to the death of Marcellus:—*O nate, ingentem luctum*, &c.—that she presented the Poet with 10,000 Sesterces, for every line.

amongst us; let him have recourse to the plain and only method of accomplishing his desire. Let him become the Patron and rewarder of merit: let him kindly have respect to the *worldly* circumstances of the ingenious Bard; on which, as we have above demonstrated, his success in the poetical line so much depends. Let him carefully follow the advice of Horace, who thus exhorts him:

Pingue pecus vati facias, ac omnia, præter
Ingenium.

Lib. II. Sat. 6.

In short, let him not with-hold his fostering hand, till the circumstances of the poet, whom, most probably, at first

—Paupertas impulit auidax,
Ut versus faceret.

Lib. II. Ep. 2.

have through his bounty experienced such a happy reverse, that no longer pursuing *poetizing*, as a *trade*, he can now triumphantly exclaim:

Melius dormire putem, quam scribere versus.

Ibidem.

Thus shall he have the satisfaction of proving, that genius is not restricted to any particular age or country; but that, *under the benign influence of Bacchus*, the Bards of Great Britain may vie with those of Greece and Rome, if once enabled to offer their vows at his shrine, with suitable fervor and devotion. Then shall we hear our Poets exclaim, whilst their works bear evidence to the truth of the assertion:

Est Deus in nobis, agitante calescimus illo.

Ovid.

This, no doubt, was the genuine purport and meaning of Pope's advice, in his Essay on Criticism:

Drink *deep*, or taste not the Pierian spring.

Let every lover of the Muses, therefore, join his prayers with mine, that this happy, this golden age, may be speedily revealed amongst us:—let us join in the pious orisons of Virgil:

Aggredere O magnos, aderit jam tempus, honores!



THEATRICAL QUERIES.

*Offered to the serious consideration of the Managers of
Drury-Lane, and Covent-Garden Theatres.*

On Saturday, Nov. 5, of the former year, Shakspeare's Tragedy of *Macbeth* was *revived*, (we quote from the Bills) with all possible appropriate splendor, at Drury-Lane Theatre. As neither pains, nor expence have been spared, on the part of the Managers, to render this play worthy at once of its immortal Author, and the patronage of the first metropolis in the world, it might have been expected, that due attention would have been paid to dramatic propriety and moral fitness, in every subordinate arrangement; especially in instances, where such attention involves neither difficulty nor additional expence.—In this view of the case, it cannot be deemed unfair to ask—

Why, in Act III. Scene V. is a magnificent Banquet exhibited, for which a *new Scene* has been expressly painted by Mr. GREENWOOD,—where a large company of guests, both ladies and gentlemen; appear seated round a table, set out in the most costly style, yet not a single person so much as even *feigns to eat*? What boots it, that *Macbeth* and his lady assure them of a “*heartly welcome*,” and that the former, in particular, expresses his hopes, that “*good digestion may wait on appetite*,”—when from the whole appearance of the Scene it is evident, that not a *single dish has been touched*?

Why in the same play, after expressly declaring, in Scene V. of the fifth Act, his determination to “*die with harness on his back*,” does *Macbeth* immediately after engage in the combat, in the very identical *robe of state*, in which he makes his appearance, in the *Banqueting-Scene*? If it be lawful, as Virgil observes, “*parvis componere magna*,”—we would recommend to Mr. KEAN, to take an example of propriety, in this respect, from *Mum Chance*, in the *Highgate-Tunnel*. That gallant hero, after a speech evidently modelled on that of *Macbeth*:

—— “*crack, Tunnel, crack!*”

At least, I'll die with *mortar* on my *back*.”

does not lose sight of scenic propriety, even amidst the “*wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds!*” but in this terrible explosion, with great justice and discrimination, makes his appearance with a *hod of mortar* on his shoulder.

In the representation of the *Merchant of Venice*, are moral fitness and physical propriety consulted, in the choice of the person, who performs the part of *Jessica*, at Drury-Lane?

Is Mr. JONES, who on the whole displays no mean talent, in his delineation of the part of *Mercutio*, at Covent-Garden, in the Tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet*, justifiable in the interpolations he makes use of, to entrap applause from the galleries?—Unless every species of *bye-play*, capable of provoking a laugh from the injudicious, be warrantable, what apology can Mr. JONES offer, for the ridiculous gestures and grimace he affects, in the fourth Scene of the second Act, where he mimics the *Nurse*, and retorts her words upon her, without any authority from Shakspeare?

Why is it, that Mr. FARLEY, as *Macaire*, in the *Forest of Bondy*; or *Dog of Montargis*, when drawing up his company to pass muster before the Colonel, appears at their head, *without his Sword*? How long has it been a point of military *etiquette*, for the officer on duty, to be the *only person unarmed*?

Does not the manner, in which *Macaire's* guilt is brought to light, in the aforesaid melo-drama, as the murderer of Captain *Aubri*, completely answer the idea conveyed by the homely, but highly appropriate phrase of "*begging the question*?" Could not a more ingenious mode have been devised for affecting this detection, that the exchange of his belt? And as the circumstance of his wearing a belt, not belonging to himself, but lent him as the means of eluding suspicion, by his accomplice, *Landri*, becomes a point of great object and importanc, is it not singular, that neither *Landri*, nor himself should perceive the necessity of *obliterating* the name of the real proprietor of the said Belt? From the awkward manner, in which the business is at present conducted, *Landri's* name seems to have been placed there, for the sole and express object of defeating the purpose, for which the belt is employed.

If the above *queries*, Mr. Editor, be deemed worthy of insertion in your Miscellany, I shall most probably feel induced to continue them periodically.—In the mean time, I am, &c.

Philaethes,

Harley-Street, }
Jun. 5, 1815. }

MEMORANDA DRAMATICA.

To the Editor of the Monthly Theatrical Reporter.

Sir,

I am induced to send you the following desultory hints, relative to the French Stage, in hopes they will not be deemed unworthy of insertion in your interesting publication. I do not pretend to give them as my own, but as the result of a series of critical remarks, on the genius and character of the French national Drama, by the celebrated Baron KNIGGE. The opinion of such a writer cannot fail to have some weight with every intelligent and dispassionate enquirer.

I am, Mr. Editor, &c.

Il Pelerino.

Oxford, 20th of Dec. 1814.

CHARACTER OF THE FRENCH DRAMA.

“The French still arrogate to their drama a decided excellence above that of all other nations. Let us examine this pretended superiority. The proudest period of the French drama was unquestionably under the reign of Louis XIV, and Louis XV: for as to their latter productions, generally speaking, they do not merit to be placed in the scale of comparison. Not only have their dramatic writers been long in the habit of fashioning their pieces from foreign models, but they have now continual resort to translation. Some authors indeed have hit upon a very ingenious method of concealing the source, to which they are indebted for their crude and hasty productions. They pilfer from the German, from the English, and the Spanish Stage, not only the leading incidents of their plot, but even the general turn of the dialogue, and action; taking care, however, so to disfigure, mutilate and disguise their dramatic bantling, that the original is no longer to be recognized.

“Their very best tragedies, those of Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire, are all cut and adapted to the same fashion and measure. In the first Act is generally brought forward some confidential personage, who laments the hard fortune of the hero, till such time, as he has pretty well put the audience in possession of the whole plot and plan of the piece. With the exception of the charm lent to the production by the versification, which is incontrovertibly smooth and

harmonious, added to a string of pompous declamation and exaggerated sentiment, with which the French drama is uniformly interlarded, and frequently in situations, where they are as little analogous, as purple patches and embroidery on a ragged coat, their claim will be found of very little weight or solidity. Their characters are not faithful delineations from Nature; the colouring is glaring, but destitute of warmth; meretricious, rather than rich. The action is not sufficiently complex in its conduct and progress, and the catastrophe or *denouement* almost invariably foreseen, from the disclosures of the first Act. The passions are exhibited, not as they actually display themselves in human life; but according to a certain convention, agreed upon and systematically followed, as the rule and guide for the French drama. Their rigid adherence to the *unities* detracts greatly from the interest of the performance. The anger of the hero, is not the anger of human nature: a Monarch, in French-tragedy, acts a part, which no French monarch ever yet *did*, or under similar circumstances *would* act: their lovers would be insupportable in actual life, and their mistresses and tragic queens little dangerous to the heart.

“With the English the case is directly the reverse. Shakspeare’s kings act precisely as the situation requires. Hence his heroes exhibit at once a faithful transcript of Nature, and of historic truth.

“From all this (continues my Author) I do not mean to infer, that the French Drama is incapable of attaining to a point, which may place it on an equal footing with the German and the English Stage. Still less would I wish to insinuate, that the genius of the nation is not susceptible of genuine pathos and feeling. But as long as the French Drama remains subjected to the trammels and shackles of antiquated theories, and sophisticated rules, it must never expect to succeed in making that forcible appeal to the heart, which constitutes the proud triumph of the German and the British Stage. I defy the whole French Theatre to produce a single drama, that can stand the test with * *Macbeth*!”

* A masterly German translation of Shakspeare’s *Macbeth* has been published by the celebrated BURGER, Author of the well-known poem of *Leonora*. Of this latter production several rival translations appeared, nearly at the same time, in this country.—The pencil of Fuseli, and Lady Diana Beauclerc were engaged on the designs and drawings.

FALLIBILITY OF PUBLIC TASTE.

How little the result of public opinion is to be regarded, as an infallible criterion of *merit*, or *incompetency*, may be inferred from the comparative reception, and the number of *successive* representations, which the following dramas experienced—

Moliere's *Miser*,—laid aside, after the first representation.

His *Misanthropist*—four successive representations.

Racine's *Plaideurs*—two ditto.

Le distrait, by Regnard, four do.

Turcaret, by le Sage, nine do.

La Gouvernante, by Nivelles de la Chaussée, seventeen representations.

Le préjugé à la mode, twenty do.

Le Roi de Cocagne, by le Grand, eighteen do.

La Loterie, by Dancourt, one and thirty do.

Le Diable boiteux, by Dancourt, five and thirty do.

Le Chevalier à la mode, by Dancourt, forty representations.

◆

VETRIS.

As a dancer, the merits of Vestris must be universally acknowledged. He was the delight and pride of the Parisian Opera. But exaggerated praise almost turned his brain. It was Vestris, who had the arrogance to declare on a certain occasion, when the conversation rolled upon the great men of the age, that he knew only *three* living characters, who deserved to be called *great men*; to wit, the King of Prussia, Voltaire, and himself!

This *Dieu de la danse* (god of the dance) as Vestris was modestly wont to style himself, perceiving that his Parisian admirers began to wax cool, resolved to change the scene of action, and exhibit himself on the London Stage. As usual on such occasions, his reputation preceded his arrival. The day announced for his first appearance at the Opera-house, happened to interfere with the sittings of Parliament. Posterity will have difficulty to credit the assertion; the two houses of British legislature actually put off their sitting, and that at a period, when the affairs of the nation were in the most critical predicament, in order to see Vestris dance!

The triumph of Vestris on this occasion experienced, however, a most cruel mortification, and that from a quarter, whence he least expected it. The price of admission had been raised, and the gallery

placed on the same footing with the pit. This exasperated the people. No sooner had Vestris appeared on the stage, than he was assailed with a storm of hisses, and bombarded with orange peel, pears, apples, and other missile weapons. Twice he attempted to stem the torrent, and appease the tempest; but in vain. At length he made a third effort, under the protection of a member of parliament, who bespoke a hearing in his favour of the audience. Universal silence now ensued. Vestris dropt down upon his knees, in the most humiliating posture, and made the most handsome apology he could. This truly singular scene lasted about five minutes, when the public declared themselves satisfied with his concession, and proclaimed his pardon, by three prolonged "*Bravos!*" Vestris hereupon exerted himself to the utmost of his ability, and at the same time to universal satisfaction—He was most rapturously applauded, and his wounded feelings were in a great measure healed, by the receipts of the night, which exceeded the sum of £1200.

—◆—

RECENT INSTANCE OF PRIEST-CRAFT AND INTOLERANCE,
EXERCISED AGAINST THE THEATRICAL PROFESSION,
IN FRANCE.

The following atrocious occurrence lately took place at Paris. Mademoiselle RAUCOUR, once the idol of the French Stage, as the favourite votary of *Melpomene*, made her final exit from this sublunary scene, at Paris, on the 14th. of the present month of January, at the advanced age of 62. Her mortal remains were brought, for the celebration of the funeral rites and obsequies, to the church of St. Rocque, rue St. Honoré, attended by a long procession of carriages, and a vast concourse of people, of all ranks and descriptions. By the rigid canons of the Roman Catholic worship, the whole theatrical community is placed in a state of religious interdict, and as such prohibited from Christian burial. On the arrival of the funeral procession at the church of St. Rocque, they found the gates locked, and admission peremptorily refused. This atrocious instance of bigot persecution and intolerance justly excited universal indignation. An immense crowd began to assemble; cries of fury and vengeance resounded from all the adjoining quarters of Paris—the rue St Honoré itself, as well as all the avenues leading to the scene of action, were blocked up, and rendered impassible, by the populace. The church doors were now forced open: but no priest made his appearance—

every thing seemed to announce the most alarming disturbance—a terrible explosion was expected to ensue.

In this state of apprehension and dread, a message was sent to the King, soliciting his interference, for the sake of humanity, and to preserve the public peace of the capital. The pious, Louis XVIII. refused to interfere in a matter, appertaining to the jurisdiction of the church. A second deputation set out for the Thuilleries, and high time indeed it was, for the tumult momentarily increased, and a disposition to proceed to extremities, menacing a general insurrection, manifested itself but too visibly. The remonstrance of this deputation was backed by a written declaration, agreed upon by the whole of the *corps dramatique* of the French metropolis, and communicated to the Court, announcing their resolve to read their public recantation, and abjure the Roman Catholic persuasion for the Lutheran profession, unless the remains of Mademoiselle RAUCOUR were immediately admitted to the privilege of Christian sepulture. This second message produced a better effect than the former. The priest-hood instantly took the alarm, and the pious Louis XVIII., after consulting his ghostly Father and Confessor, was pleased to direct, that the corpse should be admitted into the church, and the regular funeral ceremony performed, which accordingly took place, amidst reiterated cries of: "*à bas les Calotins!*"

From the above statement, we may form a pretty just idea of the actual principles and spirit of the regenerated clergy of France.—Louis XVIII. appears to have wonderfully profited of the awful lesson inculcated into him, by twenty years alienation of the sceptre of his ancestors, and, by his charitable conduct and example, does great honour to the principles of humanity he has imbibed from a long dependance on British hospitality!!!

Whether, during his residence in this country, Louis XVIII. may have taken a lesson of hatred to the theatrical community, from a certain worthy Baronet, of great pious celebrity, we shall not presume to ascertain. But we have at this moment lying before us, the printed *prospectus* of a *Tax on places of public diversion*, by Sir R. H. in which the honourable Baronet proposes an impost of *two-pence, in the shilling*, on the price of admission to the Theatres. A very moderate toll, collected at the doors of a certain conventicle, not a hundred miles from the Surrey-Road, would, in our humble opinion, prove at once more political, and more lucrative.

Anti-Tartuffe.

DICK DUGGINS'S JOURNEY TO THAMES-STREET;

OR,

A Specimen of the MODERN SUBLIME, humbly inscribed to the Admirers of Lord BYRON, Mr. WALTER SCOTT, and other great Poets of the present age.

PREFACE.

The Author of the following Poem begs leave to inform the public, (such at least whom it may concern) that this being a maiden essay of his Muse, he never should have consented to publish it, had he not been persuaded so to do, by the irresistible importunities of his wife and three poor children; not to mention the cravings of his own hungry and half-famished belly. For, to speak within compass, the time employed in composing these lines, would have been sufficient, yea and more than sufficient, to have earned eighteen shillings, or a pound, by honest labour. This, he trusts, will be admitted as a competent reason, why he hopes for a favourable judgment from the learned and ingenious reader.

Or, in plain English, the Author humbly hopes, that the Reader, out of his vast good nature, will purchase the following poem, in return for which charitable action the Author will compliment him with the appellation of an ingenious and learned Reader—a title to which he will possess a double claim, in as much as the Author has been told, by some of his best friends, that to discover and duly appreciate the beauties of this Poem, requires more ingenuity, learning and judgment, than one reader in ten hundred can pretend to.

With regard to the Poem itself, the Author begs leave to observe, that those who know the town, and are familiarly acquainted with the local scenery of its streets, cannot fail to approve of and admire the justice of this poetical picture.

As in carrying a load, a great deal depends upon, *how* you carry it; even so in writing, dependeth a great deal upon, *how* you write.

My wife says:

“There’s one comfort for you, Dick; you need never be afraid of applying exquisite words and wit, out of season!”

And my wife’s mother says:

“I can always tell Dick’s writing from that of all other people—and the reason is plain; because Dick writes *differently* from all other people!”

DICK DUGGINS'S JOURNEY &c.

With my knot on my head, though pretty well tir'd,
 To Thames' Street I went, as my business requir'd;
 A d—d heavy writing-desk pil'd on my head;
 (Poor Porters are forc'd to work hard for their bread!)
 'Tis a maxim of mine, and long has been so,
 The more I've to carry, the slower I go!
 Which custom a double advantage bestows;
 From many a blow it has sav'd my poor nose;
 And me too from treading on other folk's toes!

As near Middle-Row, Holborn, I trudged along,
 I stopt for a moment, to hear a new song.

"Pray, Mistress, (quoth I) what Song have you there?"

She grinning reply'd: "faith! 'tis "*Robin Adair*."

"Keep your d—d trash" (said I) "we've no need of such stuff;
 "Lord B**** and S**** too, write nonsense enough!"

Snow-hill is a place, which I always abhor;
 Nay, wonder not, Reader, I'll tell you what for?
 Full many a fall have I here had, alas!

Thank God, that my b-cks-de is not made of glass!

'Twas one day, last winter, a dismal, cold day,
 When snow, mud, and ice cover'd all the highway;
 With a tub full of butter, as homeward I hied,
 Just crossing the way a young damsel I spied,
 Not willing to dirty her petticoat white,
 She held up her clothes, and display'd to my sight,
 A nice calf and ankle—'twas ravishing quite!

Well pleas'd with the view I stood gaping, and cast
 Full oft a *sheep's eye* at the girl, as she pass'd;
 When, lo! of a sudden, not minding my feet,
 Poor devil! I tumbled, and measur'd the street,
 There cover'd with snow, mud, and dirt did I lie,
 The sport and derision of all who pass'd by.
 Be never "*high-minded*," my Brethren, says Paul,
 And let him, "who standeth, take heed, lest he fall,"

Each trifling occurrence I met, would indeed
 Be tedious to write, nor less tedious to read.
 For in London you can't go the length of a street,
 But something or other you're certain to meet.

If a man does but sneeze half an octave too high;
 Or tread on the toes of a fop passing by,
 Strait gathers a mob, to know "*wherefore?* and *why?*"
 Then swift go their tongues—there's no end to the clatter:
 "Dear Sir! or dear Madam! pray, what is the matter?"

Cheapside (as my grand-mother often would say)
 Of all streets in London, Cheapside's the most gay.
 Such sweet, pretty misses! such smart, pretty fops;
 By G—d! they're as fine, as the dolls in their shops!
 The shops on each side form a beautiful sight,
 Fill'd with all, which the senses can charm and delight;
 There's nothing, that Nature or Art can supply,
 But here you may *see*—if you've money—may *buy*.
 If you've *money*, I say; for the man, without money,
 Like Moses, his eyes see the milk and the honey;
 But his lips they for more shall but water, in vain;
 For, like Moses, to *taste*, he shall never obtain!

Fatigued with my load, to grow faint I began;
 (From Holborn to Thames' Street's a pretty long span!)
 How partial (thought I) is the Porter's hard fate,
 To slave, like a negro, both early and late;
 Whilst the smart, dapper shop-man, with sweet, smirking face,
 And delicate fingers, stands measuring of lace:
 A stranger to trouble, fatigue, and distress,
 And nothing to care for, but how he shall dress.

The Monument now rising full to my view,
 (How welcome the sight!) I took courage anew.
 To flag at the last would, I felt, be a shame,
 So I march'd on apace, till to Thames' Street I came.
 But *here* to proceed, is a difficult case,
 Carts, waggons, and drays so encumber the place,
 And the horses stand blowing,—full-butt in your face!
 The pavement's so narrow, so wretched, and bad,
 And the people running scouting and driving, like mad,
 Who gets through safe and sound, has great cause to be glad!
 The devil! if ever I saw such a sight,
 You're push'd on the left, and you're shov'd on the right.
 One treads on your heels, and another your toes,
 And a third, ten to one, hits you smack on the nose!
 What's still more provoking, and what I can't bear,
 They give you a blow first, and then cry "*take care!*"

As if they intended, such villains they are,
 To give you another, unless you *take care*.
 But, thank to my stars ! I had not far to go ;
 So I look'd to my steps, walk'd with caution, and slow,
 Thus creeping along, like a snail up a wall,
 I escap'd safe and sound, without ever a fall.
 When eas'd of my load, if you had but been there,
 To have seen my mad pranks, would have made you all stare.
 Not *Christian*, who long (as in *Bunyan* we read)
 Groan'd under a load, most oppressive, indeed,
 Rejoic'd more than I—from his burden when freed !
 My business thus ended, I hasten'd away,
 And spent in an alehouse the rest of the day.
 I eat, and I drank, and I smok'd at M'MUGGINGS,
 And happy, as "*Lord of the Isles*," was DICK DUGGINGS !

THEATRICAL CRITICISM

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE.

IN compliance with custom immemorial, (the propriety of which we shall not here pretend to discuss, although we are decidedly of *Hamlet's* opinion, that it is a custom, "more honoured in the breach, than in the observance,") the Proprietors of both Theatres, with the commencement of the Christmas holidays, conceive themselves authorized to prostitute the stage to the most puerile and contemptible representations, under the pompous title of *New Grand Christmas Pantomime*.

Accordingly on Monday, December 26, after the *practical* Tragedy of *George Barnwell*; in which the part of *Millwood* was sustained by Mrs. FAUCIT, who is not half diabolical enough for the character she personates, the Pantomime of *Harlequin Whittington* was given, for the edification of the rising generation. It possesses that kind of merit, which the late Mr. WYNDHAM (so felicitous in the choice of his expressions) would have characterized by the appellation of * "negative." Plot, conduct, management, and appropriate

* In allusion to that statesman's definition of the disaster, experienced by the British arms, in the affair of the *Helder*, which Mr. Wyndham ranked in the class of "negative successes."

design, it has none. The scene-painters are furnished with an opportunity of manifesting their talents, in their respective department. Mr. BOLOGNA, jun. displays much agility as *Harlequin*. GRIMALDI, as the *Clown*, extorts a laugh from us, in spite of our better judgment. Master PARSLÖE, as *Tetotum*, (a slice of the *Clown*,) bids fair to prove no unworthy successor to GRIMALDI; the *metamorphosed cat* does considerable execution among the rats, and Mrs. PARKER, who represents *Columbine*, really astonishes the spectator, by a degree of activity and sprightliness, little analogous with her years. But in reporting thus of Mrs. PARKER's performance, we do not mean to say that she is, *abstractedly* speaking, the best adapted for the part. *Difficulty* is not always the criterion of *excellence*. We remember, in our youthful days, to have seen, at the annual theatricals of Bartholomew-Fair, a woman, *without hands*, who cut very pretty watch-papers with her *toes*. But had this self-same person been endowed with hands, and had she devoted as much time and practice to cutting watch-papers with her fingers, as she did with her toes, there exists in our mind little doubt, but the watch-papers would have been executed in a far superior style.

Au reste, the late Park fooleries are most admirably ridiculed in the ascent of a *Balloon* and *Parachute*; a representation of the *Bridge* and *Pagoda* (in its *illuminated*, though not its *conflagrated* state) over the Canal, in St. James's Park: the *Temple of Concord*, which appears to have been erected to so little purpose, (if we may judge from the proceedings of the *Congress*, at Vienna,) and the grand display of Signor Rugieri, the *celebrated Artificer of Tivoli*, who lets off his squibs and crackers with nearly as much effect, as attends Lord Castlereagh's remonstrances on the annexation of Poland to Russia, and Saxony to Prussia.

On Monday, Jan. 2, the *Tempest* was performed at Covent-Garden Theatre; not as written by Shakspeare; but as mutilated and deformed, by Dryden. *Prospero* is assigned to the able hands of Mr. YOUNG. *Prince Ferdinand* was personated with much feeling and interest, by Mr. ABBOTT. This performer may justly treat with scorn the mean, mercenary abuse so profusely lavished upon him by the venal retainers of a certain cabal. *Caliban* is a part, well calculated for the physical attributes of Mr. EMERY, who never makes any pretension to grace. Miss FOOTE, in the artless, unsophisticated character of *Miranda*, discovers appropriate simplicity.

and unassuming worth. To personate with ability the light, nymph-like *Ariel*, is a task of no very easy attainment. Much excuse therefore may be made for Miss MATTHEWS, who on this occasion appeared, as the representative of this ærial being. Mrs. H. JOHNSTON acts the part of *Hippolyto*.

The above, with the exception of sundry changes in the intended bill of fare, occasioned by the indisposition of some of the performers; such as the transfer of the part of *John of Paris*, in the Opera of that name, from Mr. SINCLAIR, to Mr. JONES; and that of the *Grand Chamberlain*, from Mr. TAYLOR, to Mr. BLANCHARD, constitute nearly the whole of the novelties, which have occurred in the Covent-Garden representations, since the publication of our last number.

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THEATRICAL DIARY.

COVENT-GARDEN.

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1814.

Dec. 26, George Barnwell—Harlequin Whittington.

27, Lord of the Manor—ibid.

28, Venice Preserved—ibid.

29, Forest of Bondy—Midas—ibid.

30, Isabella—ibid.

31, Gamester—ibid.

1815.

Jan. 2, The Tempest—ibid.

3, Venice Preserved—ibid.

4, Love in a Village—ibid.

5, Isabella—ibid.

6, Forest of Bondy—John of Paris—ibid.

7, Gamester—ibid.

9, Romeo and Juliet—ibid.

10, Tempest—ibid.

11, Isabella—ibid.

12, Miller and his Men—King and the Duke—ibid.

13, Gamester—ibid.

14, Forest of Bondy—ibid.

16, Beggar's Opera—Katharine and Petruchio—ibid.

1815.

Jan. 17, Venice Preserved—Harlequin Whittington

18, Tempest—*ibid.*

19, Isabella—*ibid.*

20, Forest of Bondy—John of Paris—*ibid.*

21, Gamester—*ibid.*

23, Romeo and Juliet—*ibid.*

THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

1814.

Dec. 26, George Barnwell—Harlequin Sindbad; or, Valley of Diamonds.

27, King Richard the Third—*ibid.*

28, Belle's Stratagem—*ibid.*

29, Macbeth—*ibid.*

30, Jane Shore—*ibid.*

31, Hamlet—*ibid.*

1815.

Jan. 2, Romeo and Juliet—*ibid.*

3, Ninth Statue—Policy—*ibid.*

4, School for Scandal—*ibid.*

5, Macbeth—*ibid.*

6, Jane Shore—*ibid.*

7, Romeo and Juliet—*ibid.*

9, King Richard the Third—*ibid.*

10, Romeo and Juliet—*ibid.*

11, School for Scandal—*ibid.*

12, Macbeth—*ibid.*

13, Belle's Statagem—*ibid.*

14, Romeo and Juliet—*ibid.*

16, Jean de Paris—Ways and Means—*ibid.*

17, Birth-Day—Fortune's Frolic—*ibid.*

18, School for Scandal—*ibid.*

19, Macbeth—*ibid.*

20, All in the Wrong—*ibid.*

21, Romeo and Juliet—*ibid.*

23, King Richard the Third—*ibid.*

This theatre is not a whit behind-hand with that of Covent-Garden, in its encouragement of folly, and its active co-operation towards the disgrace and degradation of the national stage. The Christmas holidays were ushered in, according to laudable wont, by the representation of *George Barnwell*, to which succeeded an entirely *New and Superb Pantomime*, (such is the pompous title, by which it is qualified in the play-bills) 'yclept the *Valley of Diamonds*; or *Harlequin Sindbad*.

The new pantomime is founded, as far as respects its title and exordium, on the well-known tale of *Sindbad the Sailor*, in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. The principal personages and performers in the same, are of a *two-fold* description,—*animate*, and *inanimate*. Of the former class, which is by far the most numerous, are chiefly entitled to notice.—Mr. HARTLAND, as *Sindbad*, subsequently metamorphosed into *Harlequin*,—Mr. BARNES, alias *Ali-Avaricus*, afterwards *Pantaloon*; Mr. KIRBY, who acts the *Clown*; Miss VALLANCY, the representative of * *Fairetta*, the diamond-merchant's daughter,—afterwards *Columbine*; Miss POOLE, who appears in a blaze of splendour and magnificence, as *Diamonella*, the Fairy of the Valley,—and though, at once both *last* and *least*, yet most assuredly little inferior to any of the preceding, in point of merit, Miss GLEDHILL, a young girl, not more than five years of age, who dances a very pretty hornpipe, in the character and dress of a *Liliputian sailor*.

At the head of the *inanimate* performers may be justly ranked—*1st*, the monstrous fabulous bird, known by the name of *Roc*, which descends into the rich valley of diamonds; with *Sindbad* attached to its talons; disappears; re-ascends; seizes and carries off an enormous serpent; re-descends once more, and shortly after makes its final exit from the valley, bearing *Sindbad* a second time as the companion of its flight. *2nd*, The aforesaid enormous *serpent*, which twists and wriggles most delightfully, both before and after its seizure, by the *Roc*. *3rd*, certain *painted substances*, designed to represent large pieces of *raw meat*, thrown down into the valley, by the diamond-merchants, and *4th*, certain other *painted substances*, typical of *eagles*, and supposed to pounce upon the above-mentioned

* Whether in consequence of Miss VALLANCY's indisposition, or owing to some other cause, this part has been since transferred to, and ably sustained by, Miss RUGGLES.

pieces of raw meat, and bear them off to their nests. Which of these two several descriptions of performers, the *animate*, or the *inanimate*, enact their respective parts the best, it might prove a problem of difficult solution, to ascertain.

The acknowledged talents of Mr. GREENWOOD have been, most woefully, as far as respects the *object*; but with reference to the *effect*, most *successfully* employed in the design and execution of the scenery, many parts of which may be truly styled magnificent. Just subject of regret is it to see so much expence and talent thrown away upon exhibitions, which are a disgrace to the national genius, character and taste.

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MR. KEAN'S ROMEO.

Monday, Jan. 2, Mr. KEAN performed the part of *Romeo*, being his first appearance in that character, on the London Stage. In our opinion, this is a part ill adapted to his personal and physical attributes; nor does the great and general applause, which crowned his efforts on this occasion, in the least weaken or invalidate our argument. The character of *Romeo* involves an association of ideas, not one of which is embodied in Mr. KEAN's delineation. Neither his look, his manner, nor his tone of voice, can be said to accord and harmonize with the part. He is much too grave, too formal and austere for the love-sick swain, whose youthful graces, in the short space of a few moments' stolen interview, made such an indelible impression on the tender heart of *Juliet*. There is nothing whatever light and airy about him. Gentleness and suavity seem foreign to his composition. His hoarse, sepulchral tones are little in unison with those accents, which strike so forcibly and so feelingly on *Juliet's* ears, ere yet they had "drunk a hundred words of that tongue's uttering." The delicate damsel of *eighteen* does not form her choice on the same principles, as females of more experienced years.

— "when tender virgins love,
And feel the fiery god within their veins,
They affect the downy chin, and rosy cheek,
And like the youth, that's bashful as themselves."

Not easily would a girl of *Juliet's* age, and answering *Juliet's* description, as drawn by Shakspeare, be captivated, at *first sight*, by a man of Mr. KEAN's personal appearance.

In the whole range of *Romeo's* character, the part in which Mr. KEAN exhibits his powers to the greatest advantage, is avowedly in his interview with *Friar Lawrence*, in the third scene of the third act, where the benevolent priest announces to him the Prince's decree of banishment. Here Mr. KEAN has full scope for energetic and impassioned action. But he falls into exaggeration, and greatly overacts the part. He is much too violent, much too boisterous, and thumps his breast and beats his forehead too frequently, and with too little mercy. Yet this very fault, this very excess are fraught with charms in the eyes of the multitude, and draw down thunders of applause upon the performer. A rational being placed in the predicament, in which *Romeo* is here represented, would act a very different part; his sorrow would be more concentrated; his grief more inwardly felt. Public opinion *may* be (and, to judge from Mr. KEAN's reception, in this part, *is*) against us; but in matters of taste, every man has a right to his own private judgment. On this, as on every other occasion, we shall deliver our sentiments, with frankness and sincerity, uninfluenced by popular applause; unwarpd by the tide and current of general report; unbiassed by the dazzle and magic of a great name. The multitude, we know from long experience, and we have Shakspeare's authority to boot, in our favour, are at all times caught by show and noise: but the practice of actual life; the regular course of human feeling and action, ought to be the critic's guide and clue, in judging of the complicated workings and effects of the passions, in their representation and depicture, on the stage.

Analyzing therefore Mr. KEAN's performance of *Romeo*, on the above principles, we feel no hesitation to declare, that he does not answer our ideas of the part. The liberal manner, in which we have, on all former occasions, spoken of the talents and professional claims of this truly meritorious actor will, we trust, exonerate us from all imputation of prejudice, or false bias. We with pleasure concede the palm of praise and superior excellence to Mr. KEAN, in his delineation of *King Richard*, *Shylock*, *Iago*; in a word, in the generality of the characters, with the exception of *Romeo*, in which he has hitherto appeared upon the London Stage.

Miss WALSTEIN.

This lady seems to have in great measure renounced the sombre walk of tragedy, for the more pleasing line of genteel Comedy. In this respect she acts, in our humble opinion, with great judgment and propriety. We have already had occasion to notice her performance of *Letitia Hardy*, in Mrs. Cowley's sprightly comedy of the *Belle's Stratagem*, in which she acquitted herself with greater address, and was far more favourably received, than in either her *Calista*, or her *Jane Shore*.

Since the publication of our last number, Miss WALSTEIN has sustained the parts of *Lady Teazle*, in the *School for Scandal*; and that of *Lady Restless*, in Murphy's comedy of *All in the Wrong*. She made her first appearance, in the former character, on the London boards, on Wednesday, January 4, and though she is not to be placed on a par, in this part, with the original representative of the character, the late Mrs. Abingdon, she nevertheless displayed considerable talent. In the scene, where she avows her errors, and unmasks the dishonorable designs of the sentimental hypocrite *Joseph*, she was peculiarly impressive. Her return to the path of virtue and of duty, is dignified and imposing. It is just subject of regret, that she has been so long trained and fashioned to a formal style of declamation, that the effects of habit appear now to be too inveterate, to afford any hope of their being thoroughly overcome. There is likewise too much of affectation, as well as of too visible self-complacency, in her general manner.—The continual toss of her head, and incessant simper, which sits upon her lips, are no recommendations of her performance.

She appeared as the representative of *Lady Restless*, on Friday, Jan., 20. Her delineation of the part was not deficient in truth and spirit. She gave a very animated portraiture of the unhappy, jealous wife, who is ever on the watch to make discoveries, which tend to disturb her own peace of mind, and render her the martyr of imaginary wrongs.—Miss WALSTEIN, it seems, very shortly makes her *exit* from the London boards. The bills of the theatre, in announcing her speedy secession from the metropolis, assign at the same time a reason.

Miss LYDIA KELLY.

Saturday, January 21, a new *Juliet* made her appearance, at this theatre, in the person of Miss LYDIA KELLY. This young lady is sister to the pleasing actress of that name, already engaged at Drury-Lane, and niece to Mr. Kelly the musical composer. She is not, strictly speaking, a novice to the boards, having performed with considerable *eclat*, on the Edinburgh stage.

For the part of *Juliet*, Miss KELLY is well adapted. She is precisely the same age (eighteen years) ascribed to *Juliet*, by Shakespeare.—Her person is genteel; her figure pleasing, and not devoid of grace.—Her voice has not yet attained to its full strength,—neither is it always equal. But this occasional falling-off may very possibly be imputable to the embarrassment of a first appearance, before the awful tribunal of a London audience. Her general conception of the part is not amiss; in many scenes she attracted much merited applause.—She was peculiarly happy in the scene with the *Nurse*, and displayed considerable address in the passage, where she humours that old lady's infirmities, and coaxes her into compliance. Not less entitled to commendation, is the affecting manner, in which she takes leave of her mother, in the third scene of the fourth act. Here indeed, she appears to very great advantage. We were likewise much pleased with the style, in which she delivers the following passage, previous to her drinking the contents of the phial, given to her by *Fair Lawrence*.

"Where bloody Tibalt, yet but green in earth,
Lies—*fester*ing in his shroud."—

Miss O'NEILL, in pronouncing this passage, lays a degree of stress and boisterous emphasis on the word "*fester*ing," which in our opinion is much too overstrained and exaggerated. Miss KELLY gives the passage with less violence; and in this respect she appears to us to act very judiciously. Miss O'NEILL's manner has something in it loathsome and disgusting, — Miss KELLY, on the other hand, by adhering more closely to the modesty of nature, gives us only an impression of aversion, strictly analogous to the occasion.

{ On the whole, we are decidedly of opinion, that this young actress will prove an acquisition to the theatre. She is brought forward, under the immediate auspices of Mr. ARNOLD. Under the able guidance of such a tutor, she cannot fail to improve.

During the temporary indisposition of Mr. KEAN, the part of *Macbeth* was performed, on Thursday, January 12, by Mr. ELLISTON; and that of *Romeo*, on the 14th, by Mr. RAE.

Mr. MUNDEN, on the 17th, appeared, for the first time at this theatre, in his old original character of Captain *Bertram*, in the *Birth-Day*. His merit in this part is not more universally, than justly admitted.

ORATORIOS.

Under this appellation, which is derived from the Latin word *orare*, (to pray) is designated a species of musical drama, or entertainment, consisting of airs, recitatives, solos, duetts, trios, chorusses &c. the subject of which is uniformly taken either from scriptural story, or from some event, real or imaginary, connected with the Christian religion. The Oratorio, in its infant and original state, was an improvement upon the * *laudi*, or *lodi*, chaunted by the priests in praise of God, the Virgin Mary, or some particular saint or martyr, in the *oratory*, or place set apart for prayer. The honour of having first set the example of Oratorios, is ascribed to San Filippo Neri, a native of Florence, who brought this description of musical entertainment, or a least that species of vocal dialogue, to which it owes its birth, into vogue about the year 1585.

It was not however till towards the middle of the seventeenth century, that Oratorios were got up, in their present form and style. The *dramatis personæ* were either taken from scripture, or were ideal and imaginary beings, connected with morality and religion. They soon became very popular in Italy, where they were constantly represented in Lent. The first *Oratorios* publicly performed in England, were composed by the celebrated Handel, whose unrivalled excellence in this species of musical art, is universally acknowledged. His example has been followed, in England, by Mr. Smith, Mr. Stanley, (the blind organist) Dr. Arne, Dr. Worgan, Dr. Arnold,

* The *laudi*, or *lodi* are not to be confounded with the *laudes*, which form a regular part of the ritual of the Roman Catholic worship.

and more latterly, by Dr. Busby, who in 1799, produced a new Oratorio at the Haymarket Theatre, under the title of *Prophecy*.

But they have been cultivated with much greater success in Germany, than in this country. The late celebrated Dr. Haydon has acquired extraordinary fame and reputation, by his Oratorio of *Creation*; and the writer of this article still retains the most lively recollection of the pleasure he experienced, upwards of twenty years ago, in witnessing the representation of a German Oratorio, called *Thirza*, taken from the story of the seven brethren, who were put to death with their mother, by the orders of Antiochus, as may be seen in the seventh chapter of the second book of Maccabees.

The London Oratorios this year are under the immediate direction of Sir GEORGE SMART, at Drury-Lane; and Messrs ASHLEY, at Covent-Garden. From the arrangements which have been made, they promise to surpass all former precedent. At Drury-Lane, independent of the vocal talents of Mrs. Dickons, Mrs. Bland, Messrs. Pyne and Bellamy, Madame Sessi, of the Italian Opera, has been engaged. Her exertions, there can be no doubt, will prove a valuable acquisition to the undertaking.

Among the principal vocal performers, belonging to the Covent-Garden Oratorios, we particularly notice Misses Stephens, Grigglietti, and Mr. Braham. Mr. Bartleman lends his powerful co-operation. The respective directors are entitled to great credit for the liberal scale on which the undertaking is conducted, and we sincerely hope, that their enterprize may be crowned with commensurate success.

The Oratorios at both houses, commenced on Monday, January 30, and were well attended,—from the applause bestowed by a numerous audience, a favourable augury may be drawn of their future success



Cruikshank del.

Alais sculp.

MISS L. KELLY as OPHELIA.

*"We 'know what we are, but we know
not what we may be."*

London, Pub^d as the Act directs. by J. Roach, Ruffel Court, Drury Lane. March 1. 1815.